

The Hudson Valley is a vibrant and diverse region, with many long distance commuters. From my seat on the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure I am devoted to making sure that the components are in place to allow residents of the 19th District to enjoy better commutes and more accessible air travel so they can stay connected to the world, and to each other.

The 2009 Surface Transportation Bill

I serve on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, which is responsible for drafting a new six-year surface transportation bill. This legislation authorizes America's surface transportation programs. The majority of the federal funds in the bill will be allocated by formula with the state departments of transportation, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and local transit agencies determining which projects will be funded. Although the current federal-state-local partnership has served highway and transit systems well, not all communities are treated equally in the decision making process.

To complement the work done by these agencies, and to ensure communities are full partners in these important programs, a small percentage of the overall investment of the authorization bill will be available for Member-designated High Priority Projects. To ensure the transportation needs of the Hudson Valley are addressed with the investment provided in the authorization legislation, my office accepted requests for High Priority Projects.

I reviewed these requests by considering if the project is a valuable use of taxpayer funds, if it meets the Hudson Valley's needs and priorities, if it is prepared to use federal funding effectively, and if it is eligible to receive funding under existing surface transportation programs. After making those considerations, I asked the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to provide federal funds for my High Priority Projects. [The full list can be found here](#).

These projects will modernize our local roads, bridges, and transit systems, and improve public safety.

Commuting and Smart Growth

The Hudson Valley is home to a growing population, is blessed with an abundance of natural resources, and is in close proximity to New York City. In order to balance these dynamic components, I believe that we must find ways to engage in long term planning that will increase the use of mass transit, encourage "green" infrastructure, and allow the Hudson Valley to grow while protecting our open spaces.

Roads and Public Transportation

As part of pursuing a smart growth strategy for the Hudson Valley, I believe we must make sure that our roads are safe, and that they are capable of allowing people and products to move freely in the region. To reduce the strain on those roads, we also need to invest heavily in new, improved forms of public transportation that will be more accessible, more effective, and rely on new technologies like biofuels and hybrid engines to be more efficient.

Stewart International Airport Stewart International Airport is a growing hub of commercial air travel that can serve as the Hudson Valley's gateway to the rest of America and the rest of the world. Expanding road and rail access to the airport, as well as making necessary improvements to Stewart itself, are vitally important to making sure that Stewart can serve as an engine of growth and prosperity in the Hudson Valley. Through my work on the Committee on

Transportation and Infrastructure I am pursuing ways to make sure that the highways leading to Stewart can be improved and expanded, that rail service to Stewart is increased, and that the New York region has an adequate number of air traffic controllers to handle more flights.

2010 Water Resources Development Act

The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) is the comprehensive water resources law typically authorized every two years. Specifically, WRDA authorizes studies and projects within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers mission areas including navigation, flood damage reduction, hurricane and storm damage reduction, shoreline protection, and environmental restoration. As a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, I am working to ensure that Hudson Valley priorities are reflected in the 2010 Water Resources Development Act.

[The full list of WRDA Projects that I submitted can be found here.](#) All of these projects are feasible and justified on the basis of Army Corps policy and regulation, and have the requisite support from a non-federal partner.